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# ❖ The Strawberry Vine ❖

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Alice E. Souza,  
Executive Director

May, 2004

Tel. 508-823-0095  
[www.dighton-ma.gov](http://www.dighton-ma.gov)

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## **SERVING ALL DIGHTON CITIZENS OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE**

**The purpose of the Council on Aging is to help and serve it's seniors. There is no membership. Everyone is invited to participate in all activities at the senior center. Come by and enjoy.**

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### **WANTED!**

Worn, torn and battered American Flags. These flags, along with the flags being replaced in cemeteries for Memorial Day, will be properly disposed of by VFW Post #2094 at it's annual "Flag Retirement Ceremony." A flag drop off receptacle will be at the Dighton Police Station from May 20th through May 29th.

### **AROMATHERAPY**

The Dighton Council on Aging will host a fun and informative workshop where we will learn about the art and science of aromatherapy for wellness. Experience the benefits of essential oils through scent and hand massage. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, June 15, 2004 from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Dress comfortably and bring a towel, as the workshop will be experiential and informal. Please call to register at 508-823-0095 .

### **SENATOR PACHECO AT LINCOLN VILLAGE**

Senator Mark Pacheco, or a representative, will be at Lincoln Village on the second Thursday of every month. Office hours will be held from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. barring a scheduling conflict. If you have any needs or concerns that his office can help you with, come to Lincoln Village on Thursday, May 13th at 1:00 p.m.

### **RED HAT SOCIETY**

Are you interested in forming or belonging to a Red Hat Society club? A preliminary meeting is planned for Thursday, June 3, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Village Community Center to determine if anyone is interested. Please call 508-823-0095 to register.

### **FREE STATE PARK PASS**

Any person age 62 or older, can gain free admission to all Massachusetts State Parks, with a State Park Pass. This one time only application requires proof of age (copy of driver's license, birth certificate or passport) with a letter requesting the pass. Mail to:

Department of Environmental Management  
Attn: Forest & Parks Division  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114  
(617) 727-3180

### **SILVER SCREEN CLASSICS**

Don't miss this month's Silver Screen Classic! On Tuesday, May 4th, at 1:00 p.m. "Leave Her To Heaven" starring Gene Tierney, Cornell Wilde and Jeanne Crain, will be the feature presentation. The admission cost for this movie classic is only \$1.00 and includes coffee, snacks, popcorn and soda. These classics are presented at the Showcase Cinemas 1 through 10, Route 114 in Seekonk, MA. Get there early!

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**TALKING LIBRARY**

Have you listened to a good book lately? You may not be aware that the Perkins School for the Blind has a wonderful program available. The Braille and Talking Book Library loans Braille and recorded reading materials, and the playback equipment necessary to listen to them, to eligible patrons who are unable to read print books due to disability. Everything from classics to current bestsellers, as well as over seventy popular magazines. If you'd like to learn more about the Talking Book Library, call 1-800-852-3133.

**DIGHTON HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Applications are being taken for apartments at Lincoln Village, (housing for the elderly/disabled). The age requirement is 60+ and those with a permanent disability or handicap. Limits of income are \$40,800 for an individual and \$46,650 for a couple. Rent is based on 30% of gross income and includes the tenant's heat and electricity. If interested, please contact the Dighton Housing authority at 508-823-8361. The office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday.

**TAI CHI**

Tai Chi classes are held every Friday at 9:00 a.m. in the Lincoln Village Community Center. Did you know that Tai Chi is a fun way to help you maintain or regain your balance and posture? This is a great way to help prevent osteoporosis! Why not think about adding Tai Chi to your regular weekly exercise program? Classes only \$3.

**PODIATRIST**

If you are in need of a podiatrist, house calls may be arranged with Dr. Markowitz by calling 1-401-455-3554.

**BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING**

A blood pressure screening will be held on Tuesday, May 18, 2004 at Lincoln Village. Please call 508-823-0095 for an appointment. The next blood sugar screening will be held in June.

**"WELLNESS CLINIC"**

Our next wellness clinic will be held on Tuesday, May 18th during our blood pressure screening. The scheduled topic will be "Depression in Older Adults". Feel free to drop by.

**MASSAGE THERAPY**

A chair massage is a 15 minute Japanese Acupressure massage of the head, neck, shoulders, back, arms, and hands. The recipient is fully clothed and sits comfortably in a specialized therapeutic chair. The massage reduces muscle tension and calms the nervous system. Licensed Massage Therapist, Karen Tripp will be on hand from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at the May 18th wellness clinic. If you would like to try a "chair massage", mini sessions will be offered for \$5.00 on a first come, first served basis.

**LINE DANCING CLASSES**

Line Dancing classes will continue to be held on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. in the Lincoln Village Community Center throughout the month of May. Lessons only \$2.00. The last line dancing class for this season will be May 27th. Classes will resume September 9, 2004.

**LET'S GET PHYSICAL**

Exercise Classes are held every Monday and Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Lincoln Village Community Center. These classes are well attended by both, men and women. So come on out and join us. Classes just \$2.00.

## **WOMEN MAY HAVE DIFFERENT HEART DISEASE WARNING SIGNS**

If your arteries become hard and narrow from heart disease, can you “tell”? Not always. But sometimes, heart disease causes certain symptoms. These may include:

- ♦ Shortness of breath.
- ♦ Irregular heart rhythms, or arrhythmias.
- ♦ Chest pain—also known as angina. For most men, chest pain occurs behind the breastbone and in the left arm or neck. Or, pain pops up in the shoulders, arms, neck, jaw or back. This type of angina often occurs with activity but fades after a few minutes of rest. But not all chest pain is the same. Especially for women, angina may feel more like heartburn and can happen for “no reason,” even during rest. If chest pain does not go away, go to the emergency room immediately.

If you have heart disease symptoms, talk to your doctor. Without treatment, you may have a heart attack. Here are five healthy habits to protect your heart:

1. A heart-healthy lifestyle can cut a woman’s risk of heart disease by more than 80%!! Researchers considered the women to live a heart-healthy lifestyle if they:
2. Do not smoke
3. Maintain a healthy weight
4. Exercise at least 30 minutes every day
5. Eat a high-fiber, low-fat diet.

Only three percent of women studied actually lived that way. These women had an 80% lower risk of heart attacks and heart related deaths than their peers! The most important part of a healthy lifestyle appears to be not smoking. Women who smoked one to 14 cigarettes a day tripled their heart disease risks.

## **SOJOURN BEAR PROJECT**

The last meeting of the Sojourn Bear Project for this season will be Monday, May 17th from 10:00 to 12:00 noon in the Lincoln Village Community Center. These original, handmade teddy bears, have been instrumental in providing comfort to cancer patients at a very difficult time. Cathy and Lois would like to thank everyone who have helped to make the Sojourn Bears, both here and at home. Those who have knitted or crocheted vests and sweaters for the bears, those who have sewn and stuffed, or who have helped with financial contributions. This wonderful program would not be successful without you. Thank you so much and we hope to see you on September 20th. Have a safe and happy summer!

## **DON’T BE FOOLED**

Police are warning residents not to release any personal information to strangers on the telephone or on the internet. There is currently a new twist to a very old scam called the “pigeon drop.” Mailed from the Netherlands, a group promises a large amount of cash in return for their assistance, 40% of \$15.5 million dollars to be exact. In the past this has been done in person, but most recently on the internet and now there is a mailing as well. Participants are asked to put up a guarantee in varied amounts or are asked for their account numbers so the funds can be transferred. Don’t be fooled.

# May 2004

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3) Exercise @ 9:00 Walking Club Whist	4) Walking Club at Town Hall <i>Silver Screen Classic</i>	5) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Pokeno, cribbage @ 1:00 pm at L.V.	6) Walking Club at Town Hall <i>Line Dancing 10:00</i>	7) Walking Club <b>Tai Chi @ 9:00</b> <b>Lincoln Village</b>
10) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Walking Club	11) Walking Club at Town Hall	12) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Pokeno, cribbage @ 1:00 pm at L.V.	13) <b>Senator Pacheco at L. V. - 1:00</b> <i>Line dancing 10:00</i>	14) Walking Club <b>Tai Chi @ 9:00</b> <b>Lincoln Village</b>
17) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Whist <b><u>Last Sojourn Bear Project Meeting</u></b>	18) <b>Wellness Clinic</b> Blood Pressure Screening <b>Massage Therapy</b>	19) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Pokeno, cribbage @ 1:00 pm at L.V.	20) Walking Club at Town Hall <i>Line Dancing 10:00</i>	21) Walking Club <b>Tai Chi @ 9:00</b> <b>Lincoln Village</b>
24) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Walking Club	25) Walking Club at Town Hall	26) <i>Exercise @ 9:00</i> Pokeno, cribbage @ 1:00 pm at L.V.	27) <i>Last Line Dancing Class 10:00</i> Walking Club at Town Hall	28) Walking Club <b>Tai Chi @ 9:00</b> <b>Lincoln Village</b>
31)  Closed Memorial Day	Aromatherapy Tuesday, June 15th 10:00 to 11:00 Call 823-0095 to register	<b>Don't forget! Mother's Day May 9th</b>	Delicious, nutritious meals at Prime Time. Please call 24 hours in advance for reservations.	<b>Need transportation? Call Dial-A-ride (508)823-8828</b>

**Many Services** are available through your local Council on Aging Office. Below are just a few programs available: Mass Health Buy-In Program; Food Stamps; Project Bread's Food Source Hotline; Prescription Advantage Insurance Program; Nutrition Program; Vial of Life Program; RUOK Program; SHINE Program; Legal Assistance; Meals on Wheels; Health Checks and much more. If you have any questions at all concerning elder affairs please do not hesitate to call. We are here to help! Do you have any ideas that might improve what we are already doing or what we could be doing? Please call 823-0095 and let us know.

**Mission Statement:** It shall be the mission of the Dighton Council on Aging to promote, evaluate, and encourage new and existing activities and services which will enhance the quality of life of elders living in the Town of Dighton.

**Dighton Council on Aging**  
**300 Lincoln Avenue**  
**North Dighton, MA 02764**

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## **New Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit**

The Medicare Act created a new “Medicare D” benefit that will provide prescription drug insurance to Medicare beneficiaries. This benefit will be available to seniors and disabled Medicare beneficiaries beginning January 1, 2006. Until then, the Medicare program will make prescription drug discount cards available to seniors and disabled Medicare beneficiaries beginning June 1, 2004. These cards are expected to provide savings of 10-25% off retail prescription drug prices, with additional assistance available for low-income beneficiaries.

### **Q. What’s this new \$600 drug benefit Medicare is offering seniors?**

A. Medicare will provide a \$600 drug credit in 2004 and 2005 for a single person with annual income up to \$12,569 (\$16,862 for a couple). If your income is at the poverty level (\$9,310 for one person, \$12,490 for a couple), you will pay a 5% co-payment at the drugstore for your medication. If your income is above the poverty level, but still qualifies you for TA, you will have 10% coinsurance to pay. To get the \$600 benefit, you must have a Medicare Approved Drug Discount Card. But for those people whose income qualifies them for the \$600, Medicare will cover the \$30 annual fee for the discount card.

To qualify for the \$600 benefit, you must not receive drug coverage from other sources; including Medicaid or group health insurance—except if your drug coverage is through a Medicare HMO plan or a Medigap supplement plan. You must sign up for a discount drug card and the \$600 credit at the same time. You will have to submit income, retirement and health benefits information. You’ll be able to use your discount card and \$600 to buy medications the first day of the month following your application approval. Syringes and medical supplies for insulin injections are covered. The \$600 cannot be used to purchase over-the-counter drugs. If an elder does not use up their full \$600 credit in 2004, the unused portion will rollover to 2005, and a second \$600 benefit will be added. The program will end at the start of 2006.

Massachusetts officials have said they will encourage everyone in the state-run Prescription Advantage plan to sign up for the \$600 TA benefit. To find out what cards are offered in Massachusetts, and how to enroll for the \$600 credit, call the SHINE program at 1-800-Age-Info. **WATCH OUT FOR FAKES:** Don’t agree to buy any card that does not carry the official logo (with the words Medicare Approved) or costs more than \$30. Don’t give your Medicare, Social Security or credit card number to anyone over the phone or at the door. You can check bona fide card sponsors at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or by calling (800) 633-4227. Report scams to the Medicare fraud hotline at (800) 447-8477.

### **Q. Do I need a Medicare card?**

A. It depends. If you already have adequate drug coverage, or are getting better savings through other cards, an assistance program or mail order from abroad, this card may not be worthwhile. If you currently pay full retail price, or your drug coverage doesn’t meet all your costs, a card could help up to a point. If you’re eligible for the low-income credit, a card will have real value.

### **Q. Can I use this card at any pharmacy?**

A. No. Each sponsor will specify which pharmacies accept its own card.

### **Q. How do I decide which card (if any) is right for me?**

A. The tricky part is comparing the different Medicare cards to see which of your drugs they offer at a discount, how much you might save and whether those savings are better than other discounts available to you. After May 1, a comparison of Medicare cards will be posted on the official Medicare website. You can type in your Zip Code and see the drug prices and services offered by each sponsor in your area. Go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call (800) 633-4227 for this information, or if you have any more questions.

### **Q. How do I apply for a card?**

A. You can apply anytime after May 3, 2004. Sponsors will send out mailings this month with application forms for discount cards and the \$600 credit. Fill out and return the form to the sponsor of the card you’ve chosen.